

Four Ways to Avoid Montezuma's Revenge

Contributed by Chad Cook
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Vacationing in Mexico can be one of the most thrilling experiences of your life. It boasts many different sites the like of which can be found nowhere else. This is surely the country that has it all. You can stroll clean, white beaches. You can visit archaeological dig sites. You can delight in the natural beauty of so many locations. You can even relax and enjoy the amenities of a four star resort. Many people though suffer Montezuma's revenge, better known as traveler's diarrhea while in Mexico, and you should be aware of the four ways to prevent it before you leave.

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First, it is important to learn a bit about this medical condition. It affects up to fifty percent of all tourists annually, who travel to third world countries, and is caused by e.coli bacteria that will settle in your digestive tract. The most common symptoms of this condition are increased frequency, volume, and weight of stool, frequent loose stools (you can have anywhere from four to twelve watery bowel movements each day the condition lingers), abdominal cramps, nausea, vomiting, fever, and bloating. Serious cases can cause dehydration, which may involve a hospital stay. There are various treatments available, but none as effective as the course of time itself.

To prevent this medical condition, you can do as they say, and don't drink the water.

Don't even think about drinking the tap water. Interestingly, citizens of the country are able to drink it and use it for many different purposes because their digestive tracts are used to the bacteria existing in the water. Just because the locals are able to drink it and use it for various purposes does not mean you can do the same. If you must drink tap water, it should be boiled for a minimum of ten minutes before it is safe to drink. This should render it free of bacteria. Even when you brush your teeth, you shouldn't use tap water because even a little amount can be contaminated with the bacteria that will make you ill. When you purchase bottled water, make sure the seal is intact and has not been tampered with in any way. If the bottles simply contain refilled tap water, you could still face real problems. Be sure to avoid salads in the restaurants. The vegetables are washed in tap water, and now you know that even a minimal amount can set the bacteria in motion.

Another way to prevent this medical condition is to only eat fruits that can be peeled or fruits that you have washed yourself using bottled water. If you are served fresh fruit in a restaurant, it is not good enough to simply ask the waiter about how the fruit was washed. If you want to be sure of avoiding this miserable medical condition, you must take the responsibility of doing everything yourself in the way of prevention.

Another way to prevent Montezuma's Revenge is to resist eating food sold by street merchants. While they may look inviting, these foods can make you sick more quickly than anything else. You have no way of knowing how the raw ingredients were cleaned or prepared. Moreover, you don't know if the meat you are planning to eat has been cooked long enough, or at a temperature high enough to kill bacteria.

One final way to make sure of avoiding this health hazard is to shun restaurants that serve warmed over food. Bacteria forms on food while it cools. The rewarming procedure invariably fails to kill the bacteria formed on food, which guarantees, unfortunately that you will be hearing from Montezuma.

Here are a few additional pointers to guard your health on holiday. Safe items while traveling include freshly prepared dishes served steaming hot, meats that have been cooked properly (be sure to order well done meat), fruits you have peeled or washed yourself, breads and baked goods, hot drinks like tea and coffee, bottled or boiled water, and other bottled or canned drinks. Be sure to stay away from tap water, ice, raw vegetables or peeled fruits that you have not washed with bottled water yourself, cold salads, buffets, food sold in street kiosks, and any food that has been rewarmed.

Visiting Mexico can be a wonderful experience. You'll stay healthy for the duration of your trip if you just follow these easy tips.